

Message Text

PAGE 01 SAIGON 06860 201022 Z

43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

OMB-01 AID-20 IO-12 DPW-01 RSR-01 /116 W

----- 122653

R 200855 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 482

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

S E C R E T SAIGON 6860

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS MILI VS

SUBJ: ARVN REDEPLOYMENTS IN BINH DINH PROVINCE IN FACE OF
ANTICIPATED ENEMY OFFENSIVE ACTION

THE FOLLOWING AMCONSUL NHA TRANG REPEATED QUOTE

S E C R E T NHA TRANG 408

E. O.11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS MILI VS

SUBJECT: ARVN REDEPLOYMENTS IN BINH DINH PROVINCE IN FACE OF
ANTICIPATED ENEMY OFFENSIVE ACTION

REF: NHA TRANG 0394 (NOTAL), WEEKLY OVERVIEW APRIL 9-15

1. SUMMARY: ALL RVNAF MAIN- FORCE UNITS IN BINH DINH ARE BEING
DEPLOYED TO THE FOUR NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF THE PROVINCE IN ANTICI-
PATION OF ENEMY OFFENSIVE ACTION THERE WHICH, COMMANDERS BELIEVE,
WOULD BE COORDINATED WITH A RENEWED ENEMY EFFORT AGAINST SA HUYNH
VILLAGE, QUANG NGAI. ARVN COMMANDERS CONSIDER THAT PARIS AGREEMENT
HAS LEFT THEM IN A HIGHLY DISADVANTAGEOUS POSITION IN DEALING WITH
WHAT THEY SEE AS A GROWING ENEMY THREAT, AND WE ARE INCLINED TO
AGREE THAT REDEPLOYMENTS ARE ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE IN NATURE.

SECRET

PAGE 02 SAIGON 06860 201022 Z

END SUMMARY.

2. COMMANDER OF ARVN 22 ND DIVISION AND BINH DINH PROVINCE CHIEF ARE MAKING SEVERAL TROOP REDEPLOYMENTS IN RESPONSE TO REPORTED ENEMY BUILD- UP IN NORTHERN BINH DINH. TWO BATTALIONS OF 42 ND REGIMENT, PREVIOUSLY TASKED WITH SECURING QL-19 IN WESTERN BINH KHE DISTRICT, WERE REPLACED EARLY LAST WEEK BY TWO RF BATTALIONS FROM PHU MY AND PHU CAT DISTRICTS. AFTER TEN DAYS OF REST AND RETRAINING, THE TWO ARVN BATTALIONS WILL BE SENT TO AN UNSPECIFIED LOCATION IN NORTHERN PART OF PROVINCE.

3. MEANWHILE, ARVN 47 TH REGT, WHICH HAD BEEN REPLACED IN TAM QUAN DISTRICT BY THREE BATTALIONS OF 6 TH RANGER GROUP AT BEGINNING OF APRIL AND BROUGHT SOUTH TO PHU TAI FOR A REST, WAS SENT TO NORTHERN PHU MY DISTRICT, JUST SOUTH OF PHU CU PASS, ON OR ABOUT APRIL 11.

4. WHEN THESE MOVES ARE COMPLETE, ALL OF 22 ND DIVISION' S REGIMENTS (40 TH, 41 ST, 42 ND AND 47 TH) AND THE RANGER GROUP WILL BE IN BINH DINH' S FOUR NORTHERN DISTRICTS.

5. CG OF 22 ND DIVISION HAS LAUNCHED OPERATIONS AGAINST ELEMENTS OF TWO NVA REGIMENTS (IDENTIFIED AS 21 ST AND 2 ND, SUBORDINATE TO NVA 3 RD DIVISION) THAT HAVE TAKEN UP POSITIONS IN HILLS ON BOTH SIDES OF PHU CU PASS. GEN. NIEM HAS TASKED 41 ST REGT WITH CLEARING ENEMY FROM PASS AREA, WHILE 47 TH REGT -- DEPLOYED IN VAN AN VALLEY JUST TO SOUTH OF PASS -- IS SERVING AS BLOCKING FORCE. AIRSTRIKES WERE MADE AGAINST THE ENEMY DURING THE PAST WEEK, BUT ENEMY FORCES, DESPITE LOSSES, ARE HANGING ON TO THEIR POSITIONS. DESPITE ALL THE ACTIVITY ON THE HEIGHTS ABOVE, QL-1 THROUGH THE PASS REMAINS OPEN.

6. EARLIER GVN PLANS TO CLEAR VIET CONG UNITS FROM COASTAL STRIPS OF PHU MY, HOAI NHON AND TAM QUAN DISTRICTS IN SUPPORT OF RETURN- TO- VILLAGE (RTV) PROGRAM, ON WHICH WE HAD REPORTED EARLIER, ARE ON BACK BURNER UNTIL CURRENT NVA THREAT HAS BEEN DEALT WITH. TAM QUAN DISTRICT CHIEF TOLD QUI NHON POLOFF ON APRIL 16 THAT FRIENDLY FORCES WERE INSUFFICIENT TO DO ANY MORE THAN HOLD THE KILOMETER- WIDE STRIP ALONG QL-1 WHICH TRAVERSES THE DISTRICT AND LAUNCH OCCASIONAL BUT TEMPORARY FORAYS INTO ADJOINING AND STILL HEAVILY POPULATED VC TERRITORY.

7. THE SECOND PHASE OF THE RTV PROGRAM IN TAM QUAN WHICH AIMED AT RESETTLING ABOUT 10,000 PEOPLE IN EIGHT HAMLETS ALONG QL-1 HAS BEEN SECRET

PAGE 03 SAIGON 06860 201022 Z

POSTPONED INDEFINITELY BECAUSE OF POOR SECURITY AND INSUFFICIENT FRIENDLY- CONTROLLED RICE LAND TO SUPPORT THE RETURNEES. THE FIVE HAMLETS THAT WERE RESETTLED IN LATE MARCH HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO A TOTAL OF 16 ENEMY SHELLINGS APPARENTLY AIMED AT DISPERSING THE PEOPLE OUT OF THE CONSOLIDATED RESETTLEMENT SITES ALONG QL-1 AND AWAY FROM THE HIGHWAY TO AREAS WHERE THE ENEMY CAN HAVE EASIER ACCESS TO THEM. AS A RESULT OF SHELLINGS AND GENERALLY INSECURE SITUATION IN TAM QUAN, BETWEEN 3,000 AND 4,000 OF THE 7,000 WHO WENT BACK TO TAM QUAN IN MARCH HAVE NOW RETURNED TO PHU TAI CAMPS IN SOUTHERN PART OF

PROVINCE, AND PROVINCE CHIEF HAS ORDERED THAT THEY BE GIVEN GVN SUPPORT ONCE AGAIN. OTHERS CONTINUE TO COMMUTE BETWEEN THE TWO LOCATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECURITY SITUATION IN TAM QUAN.

8. COMMENT: AS QUI NHON POLOFF HAS REMARKED, CONCENTRATION OF ALL FRIENDLY MAIN- FORCE UNITS IN NORTHERN PART OF BINH DINH REPRESENTS SOMETHING OF A GAMBLE. HOWEVER, DIVISION COMMANDER AND PROVINCE CHIEF ARE CONVINCED THAT MAIN THRUST OF ANTICIPATED NVA OFFENSIVE WILL BE AIMED AT NORTHERN DISTRICTS AND THAT ARVN UNITS THERE NEEDED REINFORCING. THEY BELIEVE FURTHER THAT SUCH AN OFFENSIVE WOULD BE COMBINED WITH RENEWED ENEMY ACTION AGAINST SA HUYNH AREA IN QUANG NGAI. THEY ARE CONCERNED ALSO BY REPORTS THAT SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN LANDED BY SEA ON COAST OF HOAI NHON DISTRICT, THAT ENEMY TRUCKS ARE CONSTANTLY SHUTTling SUPPLIES SOUTH INTO THE LOWER REACHES OF ENEMY- CONTROLLED AN LAO VALLEY, AND THAT ENEMY IS USING A RECENTLY- IMPROVED ROAD FROM BA TO DISTRICT IN QUANG NGAI TO SUPPLY ITS FORCES IN TAM QUAN DISTRICT. GVN COMMANDERS ALSO BELIEVE REPORTS OF ENEMY TANKS IN THE AN LAO VALLEY.

9. IN LARGER PERSPECTIVE, THESE OFFICERS -- AND MG TOAN, THE MR 2 COMMANDER -- SEE THEIR FORCES AND THE POPULATION OF NORTHERN BINH DINH BEING PRESSED BOTH FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND FROM THE SEA. THEY BELIEVE THE NVA WILL TRY ONCE AGAIN, AS IT HAS SO OFTEN SINCE 1965, TO GET CONTROL OF A BELT OF TERRITORY ACROSS THE WIDTH OF SOUTH VIET- NAM, ROUGHLY ALONG THE MR 1/ MR 2 BOUNDARY, PARALLEL TO AND APPROXIMATELY 50 KMS NORTH OF GVN- CONTROLLED QL-19. IN THE COURSE OF SUCH AN ATTEMPT, THE ENTIRE RETURN- TO- VILLAGE PROGRAM (RTV) IN BINH DINH COULD BE WRECKED.

10. BEFORE JANUARY 28, ARVN WOULD HAVE BEEN FREE TO CONDUCT PRE-EMPTIVE OPERATIONS AGAINST ANY COMPARABLE ENEMY BUILD- UP AND (AT LEAST IN THEORY) WOULD NOT HAVE ALLOWED ENEMY UNITS TO HANG ON THE FRINGES OF POPULATED AREAS AND CARRY OUT THE DAILY HARASSMENT THAT
SECRET

PAGE 04 SAIGON 06860 201022 Z

FRIENDLY UNITS IN NORTHERN BINH DINH HAVE EXPERIENCED FOR THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS. NOW, HOWEVER, SUCH ACTION IS FORBIDDEN BY THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AND THE NVA REMAINS UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE AND UNHAMPERED. IN TOAN' S VIEW, WHEN A SITUATION BECOMES AS SERIOUS AS HE NOW FINDS IT IN NORTHERN BINH DINH, THE MARGINS OF FRIENDLY CONTROL HAVE TO BE CLEARED.

11. THIS IS THE RATIONALE OF THE CURRENT REDEPLOYMENTS IN BINH DINH. WHILE WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT THE THREAT IS SO GRAVE OR SO IMMINENT AS THE GVN COMMANDERS BELIEVE IT TO BE, WE CONSIDER THE REDEPLOYMENTS JUSTIFIABLE.
ENGLE UNQUOTE
BUNKER

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 07 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON06860
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730460/abqcehpu.tel
Line Count: 162
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NHA TRANG 0394 (NOTAL), WEEKLY OVERVIEW APRIL 9-15
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Aug-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <28-Nov-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980128
Subject: ARVN REDEPLOYMENTS IN BINH DINH PROVINCE IN FACE OF ANTICIPATED ENEMY OFFENSIVE ACTION
TAGS: MILI, MOPS, VS
To: STATE INFO JEC PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005